29 November 1976

Dear Harold:

The enclosed items all should be at least relatively self-explanatory in terms of possible interest to you at the time they were set aside for you. Some, at least may fill in possible chinks.

I do wish to thank you for the copy of Karnow's book on Mao. I've known of it for several years but never happened to see it and pick it up. Glad to have it, indeed. His perspective as of the time of writing should be helpful. You were most thoughtful to send it.

You are quite right: there has been nothing special to say, and to a surprising extent no time in which to say it. For more than a month I've been preoccupied with finishing up the complicated job of rebuilding the carport. It has taken much time because of the necessity of coordinating with our remarkably helpful and generous neighbor, and because it involves so much heavy work on a steep hillside. Altogether we poured 14 cubic yards of concrete in three different sessions, which may give you some idea. Before, during and after I did all the preparation work such as digging, building forms, and cleaning up the incredible mess afterward. The two-inch sheet of reinforced concrete covering the carport and the equally large ramp now has been curing nearly two weeks, watered down every night and kept damp so the crystallization process will continue as long as possible to provide maximum strength before we drive the car on it and risk cracking it.

With this continuing distraction there has been little opportunity to reply to any of your developments, really, before you would have forgotten about them and gone on to other things. I would like to say that we've followed your contacts with the new committee and your handling of same with a great deal of interest and sympathy. I do not see how you could have done otherwise. Also, your clippings on China and related subjects continue to fill holes and explain questions raised in the material we get here. Except for one thing: I agreed at first with your thought that the crackdown on the South Koreans was campaign politics to a considerable extent; But increasingly I suspect it is much bigger, that it implies a fundamental change in policy or at least a fundamental dispute over policy. Even as a gesture to reassure Peking it needs further explanation. The spectacle of our government actually doing anything SENSIBLE about a Cold War arena like Korea is entirely too un-American for anyone to feel comfortable about it

In the absence of any recent protests to GHA et al we assume your physical condition at least has stabilized and that you're both getting along reasonbly well. We do hope so. We're both fine , have avoided both the swine flu and the inoculation therefor, and have no complaint.

We're on our way to the dentist for semi-annual checkups and cleaning, so I shall wind this up with a hope to do better about writing in the future. Meanwhile, all the best from us both,

jdw